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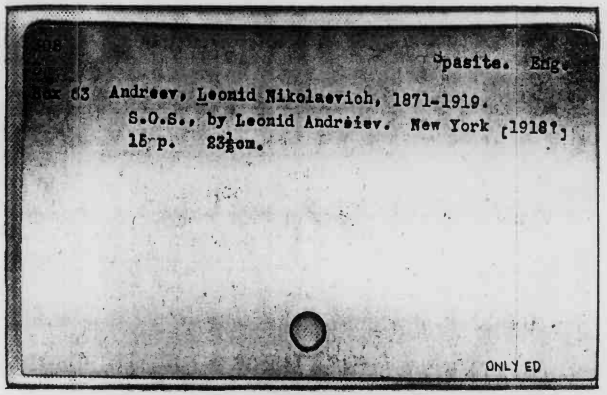

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LEONID ANDREIEV

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LEONID ANDREIEV

6 Feb. 1920 - C.R.W.

We give below an article by one of the most remarkable Russian authors—L. N. Andreiev. He is a glowing Russian patriot, and a democrat, who for many years has waged relentless war on Czarism.

During the war, his appeals to the Russian people, workmen, peasants, and soldiers have made the deepest impression in Russia and have been issued in millions of copies. In the history of the war, and in the history of the struggle for the freedom of the Russian people the articles and appeals issued by Andreiev will be classed among the most remarkable documents of their period.

We Russians cannot without deep emotion read this new appeal by Andreiev.

This is the cry of a Russian patriot, who loves his country deeply. He sees her immeasurable sufferings, and at the same time implicitly believes in her great and bright future.

We wish that everyone should know what Andreiev says; our friends as well as our enemies.

The attitude of the Allied Governments toward Russia is either treason or madness.

Either the Allies know what the Bolsheviki are, or they do not know.

If they know the character of those men whom they invited to Princes Islands to make peace for Russia—the Russia that is bleeding to death — then it is treason, — a treason differing from any other kind by its stupendous dimensions,—but having the same purpose as in the days of Judah:

Golgotha for the one — thirty pieces of silver for the other.

If the Allies, inviting the Bolsheviki to attend the friendly meeting, do *not* know what they are, then it is madness. It is madness, because after a year and a half of Bolshevist rule in Russia, after a flashing up of Bolshevism in Germany, and other countries, only a madman could fail to see and to understand the power of evil and destruction wielded in Europe by these savages who have revolted against culture, law and the code of human morals.

Yes, I repeat, only madmen can fail to understand the clearly defined actions of the Bolsheviki.

He must be as blind as a mole, or have no eyes at all, not to see the murders, the destruction, the graveyards, the prisons, the lunatic asylums, not to see what the famine and the horror have made of Petrograd, and alas! of many other Russian cities.

He must have no ears at all, or be stone deaf, not to hear the wails, the groans, the cries of women, the heartrending screams of children, the death-rattle of strangled men, the crackling rifle shots fired by the murderers, not to hear what, during the last year and a half, have become the only sounds in Russia.

He must not know the difference between right and wrong, between justice and injustice,—as madmen do not know this difference—he who does not feel the meaning of the Bolshevist saturnalia, of the incessant lies, lies at times inarticulate and

stupid, like the mumbling of a drunkard—the lies of Lenine's decrees—at times high sounding and bombastic—the lies of the bloodstained clown Trotzki—at times artless and simple as the lies for the beguiling of little children.

And more, he must have no memory—like a helpless invalid who has lost human semblance and mind—he who has forgotten Lenine's sealed train, he who has forgotten that Russian Bolshevism is a bastard offspring from the German Imperial Bank and the criminal soul of William, he who has forgotten the treaty of Brest-Litovsk which the German agents conceived as the last resort for a victory over the Allies. He must have no memory at all to forget Prussia and Galicia soaked with the life blood of Russians, to forget Korniloff and Kalendin who fell victims to their duty and to their loyalty to the Allies; to forget Admiral Shastny and General Dukonin, and the devastation of Jaroslav, the young cadets and students who died, but never lost their faith in Russia and in you, dear Allies; to forget the thousands of Russian officers who have been persecuted for this faith and chased and murdered like dogs, and whom you now insult so cruelly—oh, I know you do it unconsciously—by your mildness towards their murderers and hangmen.

To crown this lack of memory it was necessary to forget that William, the German Kaiser, was preparing to dine in Paris, and, if Wilson succeeded where he could not, it was simply for the reason that Wilson could safely cross two oceans—the Atlantic and the ocean of Russian blood shed in defence of the common cause of the Allies.

And more, he must be utterly deficient in the feeling of decency, he must be wholly incapable of distinguishing between the clean and the unclean—like a lunatic who eats refuse instead of food—to swallow with a pleasant smile, all the insults, the mockery, and the buffetings which the Bolsheviki have dealt out to the representatives of the Allied nations in Petrograd.

I do not dare to speak of Wilson, who, in reply to his telegram of sympathy to the young "accommodating" Government, received a slap on the face from Zinoviev. I do not dare to do so lest he should feel inclined, as a Christian and friend of humanity, to turn the other cheek as has happened now before our eyes.

And what about the assault on the British Embassy and the murders there? What about the proclamation making outlaws of British subjects in Russia?

But if he has ears, eyes, senses, and a will, he must be a savage and a moral wreck like the Bolsheviki themselves—to behold apathetically the inhuman deeds of the Bolsheviki and calls such deeds other names than crime, murder, lies and robbery. robbery.

He must be devoid of the feelings of human compassion, or stand on the moral level of an idiot or madman, he who, seeing a scoundrel raping a woman, or an unnatural mother tormenting her child, calls such deeds "their internal affairs" and does not intervene, pretending that such doings, no matter by whom perpetrated, are called "socialism" and "communism."

These words are sacred to the whole of humanity; they enchant the human soul; but, when malignant buffoons give the name of "Vanguard of Chinese Revolutionary Democracy" to the ignorant hordes of mercenary Chinese murderers, then he, who believing this, drops into a snare as shameless and simple, as this one, must have no living soul in his bosom. Yes, shameless, because the utilization of these mercenary yellow murderers is a thing unheard of in the annals of the most terrible European tyrannies.

It is horrible to think that Europe for more than a year could c o n t e m p l a t e with e q u a n i m i t y the sight of these exotic beasts tearing out our hearts, and cannot till now decide whether this is the vanguard of democracy or the vanguard of fiends let loose from hell to destroy our ill-starred world.

And yet seeing it, they sent them an invitation to the Princes Islands!

Can anybody admit the idea that the Great Powers are governed by men ripe for the lunatic asylum? The whole world knows them for men of energy, who have shown much common sense during the war, and the esteem they have earned, even from their enemies, makes it impossible to give credence to a supposition of their abnormality.

No, no! they are not madmen. But if this is not madness what then is it?

Life does not always follow the lines laid out by the laws of logic.

Here, I have before me the portrait of Wilson with his broad and frank smile. The same smile is spread over the faces of his collaborators, and yet I find it difficult to believe in the sincerity of this cheerful and careless smile.

Is the soul of Wilson as serene as the features on this portrait? Are the thoughts of Lloyd George as calm and bold as the expression of his eyes? Do they not feel secret fear, hesitations, and want of determination? If that be so, then there is no need to look for treason as an explanation of what has happened.

Then, have we not before us, instead of the classic and frightful spectre of Judah, the not less classic but more commonplace spectre of Pilate washing his hands?

Pilate knew Jesus Christ to be innocent for he had been told so by his wife. He was neither a madman nor a scoundrel; he was only Pilate who said "The blood of this man is not upon me", and he washed his hands and sent the Savior to Caiaphas. Caiaphas sent him to Anna, and Anna back to Caiaphas.

This sending of Christ with a rope on his neck from one judge to another, does it not remind one of the sending of Russia to the Princes Islands?

"Sleep lively Russia till thou comest to the cross". "Thy blood is not on Wilson nor Lloyd George."

Has not the whole world seen them washing their hands?

All have seen it and many have officiously handed them the towel.

Was it worth while to begin the song so loudly, to finish it up with the falsetto of Pilate? Why then defend Belgium's neutrality, why defend Servia, why raise millions of men, why shed oceans of blood, why threaten Germany with terrible judgment for her atrocities, why shed tears over Louvain and the Lusitania, calling upon heaven as a witness, why in the course of five years beat oneself on the breast before the God of humanity? and after all this finish it up with the wash basin.

The world had longed for the victory of the Allies as one cherishes the Gospel of Christ, as one hopes for the resurrection from the dead.

And those who have paid with their lives for this victory, they had longed for it too.

The people believed that this victory would bring justice into the world and that the peace the honorable gentlemen were going to establish would be a real peace, not the beginning of new torments, new murders, new destruction, and new extermination of the defenceless.

And when the sound of the victory bells rang over the blood-stained lands, many were the people who fancied they saw the dawn of hope and happiness. How dark and grey with fright grew the faces of the murderers in the burning light of resuscitating law.

These were the days of a fairy tale.

The people of Petrograd worn out with torment and darkened with pain, smiled and believed in the English as in God. This was a strange and happy dream, the dream of martyrs, when every gunshot seemed to come from an English gun, when

all ran to the Neva-river to see the English front that had come over night. And the murderers trembled; a scare crow resembling an Englishman would have made the whole band of Cains run in sheer panic and fright.

With comic obstinacy you accuse William the old, the piteous and weak one. You want to bring him to justice for the sins of his people, and at the same time hold out your hand to the strong young murderers, the monsters and mongrels who even now spill the blood of the innocent. And the murderer feels the caress to his hand, and it encourages him. He does not think any more of flight, but laughs at you, and he does not fear a living Englishman now because he thinks him a scarecrow.

The war is finished! No more killing! Down with the weapons! These are the noble words which the people expected to hear from the Allies when the wreath of victory adorned their arms; but, instead of this, a sprinkling of lukewarm humanity which Wilson pours on the roaring fires.

And blood, blood, oceans of blood!

Now, as before, the fighting goes on. Some one takes towns, some one else surrenders them. Someone is beaten, another has his throat cut. Something has been wrecked, something destroyed.

With the rapidity of a prairie fire before a hurricane spreads the aimless bloody revolt, reaching out on the ground, flaring up here and there, and scattering sparks on the dry grass. And Europe, with her nerves unstrung by five years' of privations, under the spell of the excitement caused by the war, with her masses out of their mental equilibrium and accessible to the wildest suggestions, is unable to resist this fire.

The irresolution of the world's leaders, the double game they play, hinders them from taking up a definite position, and making their stand on one side or the other, and pushes Europe

into the deathly embrace of revolt that has already strangled the revolution in Russia, is strangling it now in Germany, will scourge the whole of Europe either tomorrow or today, then America, and will bring with it murder, robberies, and war of all against all.

Today, Berlin is left without electricity, tomorrow London will be left without coal. In a few weeks time all the railroads, perhaps, will stop. The ships loaded with food supplies will be detained in the ports and the skeleton of famine will descend upon Europe exterminating alike the just and unjust.

Such is the revenge ordained by fate for the broken vows of the Allies made before God, the Judge of humanity.

Not to the Governments of the Entente who have already spoken their word of insult, I address my prayer for help: "Save us!" Not to those who have broken their vows, but to you, people of Europe, in whose nobleness I believe now as before.

As a wireless telegrapher on a sinking ship sends out in the darkness of night his last call: "HELP, QUICK, WE SINK, HELP!" so do I, firm in my belief in man, send out into space and darkness my call: "HELP, FOR THE SINKING!"

If only you knew how black the night is! If my words could only convey to you an idea of the density of this darkness?

Whom do I call? I do not know. Does the wireless telegrapher know whom he calls? For thousands of miles, perhaps, the sea may be a waste around us, and not a living soul may hear my call.

The night is dark. Perhaps far away someone hearing my call says: "Why should I go there where I too may perish?" and he continues on his way.

The night is dark and the waves are terrible but the telegrapher remains firm in his trust in man and he stubbornly sends

out his call till the end, till the last fire is extinguished, and his wireless message is hushed forever.

What does he believe in? He believes in mankind, as also do I. He believes in the eternal law of human love, in the human heart.

It cannot be that one man should not help another who is perishing. It cannot be that one man should deliver another unto death without help, without an attempt even to save him. It cannot be that a call for help should find no answer.

Somebody must come, I do not know his name, but like a clairvoyant I can see his features, I see his soul which is akin to mine.

I feel that the desire to render assistance strengthens his muscles, sharpens his eyesight, quickens his senses, and enlightens his way.

I pray for help not for the Russian nation, because to help it would be a task too heavy. The Almighty alone has power over its destinies.

In these sad days when the disdain and laughter of fools have become the lot of our great country, downtrodden as she is, I am proud to bear the name of a Russian and I firmly believe in her future greatness and fame.

Giants, like the Russian nation, cannot perish.

Whether the Allied Governments come to her help, or whether they leave her to get out of the putrid swamp as best she can, makes no difference. When the hour comes Russia will arise from her grave to walk the highroad of her bright future, and will once more take her place among the great nations of the world.

What death is to us mortals, whose life lasts only a moment, is not more than a pulsation of the heart in the life of a great and immortal nation.

Hundred thousands of deaths, a few years of suffering, what is this for Russia with her immense and immeasurable destiny?

No, not help for Russia, I ask from thee, man, that I am waiting for.

But think of the thousands of human beings who have but one life, lasting a moment only, and who die in unspeakable sufferings or live a life worse than death.

It does not matter that they bear the name of Russians, but it matters immensely that these human beings suffer without a ray of light, as in hell itself whence there is no return and where the powers of evil and darkness reign over them supreme and without limit.

Their sufferings can yet be put an end to, their throats can yet be freed from the clutches of death.

For their salvation I pray mankind.

Friend! I will not even try to tell *thee* how fearful life is here now, in Russia, in our dying Petrograd. Others have said enough, and new words cannot be found in human language.

But to sum up these sufferings I will say only one word: the victims die without defence and the murderers go about without punishment!

There is less horror in death, or in the most awful sufferings if you know that the law will protect you, that sooner or later it will demand account for the bloodshed, and will not consider it equal in value to a bottle of whiskey which a drunkard has spilled on the roadway.

There is no horror in death if you know that sooner or later conscience will awaken in the heart of the murderer and condemn him. But horrible is death and unbearable is suffering if the crime be committed in broad daylight, on the market place,

under the eyes of indifferent onlookers, and of heaven itself, and, if dying, you know that the murderer has no conscience, that he has dined well, is in good disposition and rich, and that under cover of alluring phrases he not only will escape punishment but will command respect and flattery.

It is horrible when children perish from hunger whilst murderers dine copiously and Trotzki pours down his gullet the last bottle of milk.

It is horrible to see the cemeteries of Petrograd filled to the utmost with new graves of the slaughtered whilst the murderers have an open way, not only to Princes Islands, but into the whole wide world and that the riches they have stolen will allow them to live in luxury in the warm climates of the most beautiful spots of the entire venal world.

Friend! whom I call, come to me, give me thy hand.

I speak singly to every Frenchman.

Let your leaders be weak, let them make mistakes, but then correct these mistakes and let your strength invigorate and multiply their strength.

From the days of childhood I have learned to love and esteem thee. In the history of France I looked for the models of chivalry and nobleness. From thee I have first heard of liberty, equality and brotherhood. From thee I received my faith in man, the faith I have clung to all through my life and which I hope to keep till my dying day.

I have sobbed when the German hordes trampled thy beautiful country, and I know that thou canst not laugh at the sight of flowing tears.

And thee, Englishman, I pray for our salvation.

Thou, in thy tongue, hast created the call that has become the law of the seas, the call that makes every seaman go to the

help of the vessel in distress. In thy ears my call will not ring in vain.

When Germany loudly sung her hymn, the hymn so hateful to thee, there rang in its sounds the fear and the presentiment of the inevitable defeat, as if she knew that thou art the man whose word is law and whose promise is as solid as a rock.

Fulfill thy duty, the duty of man, and come to me! Give me thy hand, for human lives are in danger and death carries off women and children.

And thee, American, I call! Thou art young and rich and full of vigor and energy. Thou willst that the torch of thy freedom should enlighten the whole of Europe.

Come to us! Look at our fearful life. See how harrassed we are both in mind and body. Look at us once, only once, and I know thou will'st cry out with horror and send imprecations to the deceivers and liars who give out their tyranny as the fervent wish for the freedom of the Russian people.

And thee Italian, and thee Swede, and thee Hindu I call, all, all who hear me!

In every nation there are men who have hearts, and each one of them I call singly.

The hour has come when the men of the whole world must fight, not for land, nor riches, nor power, but for the life of the human being and for its victory over the beast.

What now happens in Russia, what has begun and will continue in Germany, will spread further. All this is not revolution, it is chaos and darkness called forth from the black haunts and armed by the war for the destruction of the world.

Let your irresolute Governments give arms and money, and you, the men, give yourselves, your vigor, your chivalry and your valor. Let the wearied ones stay at home, let the faint ones warm themselves in their cosy corners, let them, who can, sleep

in this fearful night, but you, the strong ones, you the bold ones, with a valorous heart, come to help those who perish in Russia.

My last call is addressed to thee, man of letters in all countries, whosoever thou may'st be, Englishman, Frenchman, or American!

Support my appeal for help for the perishing.

I know that hundreds of millions of dollars have been strewn about abroad for the purpose of corrupting public opinion.

I know that thousands of printing presses manufacture the Bolshevist lies and spread them broadcast. Thousands of liars shout, howl, and deceive the people, filling the world with masks that carefully hide the monstrous features underneath them.

The air itself seems to be corrupted with lies. The wireless stations of the Bolsheviki send out falsified news, the constant repetition of which obscures the truth and darkens human reason.

But I know also that among writers there are men like Knights of old, who write with the blood of their heart, who give the best that is in them, and to them I appeal, to each one singly, and to all of them collectively:

SAVE US! OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE DANGER THAT THREATENS HUMANITY.

HELP US!

QUICK!

COME QUICK!

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